

Washington, DC – U.S. Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) met last week with Major General Richard E. Webber, Commander of the 24th Air Force at Lackland Air Force Base, to discuss cyber security efforts in San Antonio.

The two discussed the on-going mission at the newly created 24th

Air Force, which provides commanders with trained and ready cyber forces to plan and conduct cyberspace operations and defend the Air Force information grid.

Major General Webber also talked about the role the 24th

Air Force can play in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in responding to natural disasters using Air Force combat camera units.

“Major General Webber is incredibly qualified to lead the 24th

Air Force Command and Lackland is fortunate to have him at the helm,” Congressman Rodriguez said. “His leadership is particularly critical as we continue to develop our profile as a leader in this emerging industry of cyber-security. It’s good for our community, the region and the nation.”

Major General Webber directs two wings and Air Force Network Operations at Lackland AFB, and one wing at Robins AFB in Georgia. He informed Congressman Rodriguez that the 24th

Air Force achieved “initial operational capability” on January 22, meaning that it can perform critical missions. He said the support of local officials for the 24th

Command has been “fantastic.”

The meeting took place a day after Congressman Rodriguez introduced **HR 4507**

, which creates a consortium to train and prepare first responders to deal with cyber attacks.

“The world is changing rapidly and threats are no longer confined to bricks and mortar,” said Congressman Rodriguez. “Our cyber networks and the information they carry are vulnerable too. This bill would create a structure to train and prepare local individuals to respond immediately to threats and attacks.”

Rodriguez said the bill builds on the research UTSA has been doing for years and incorporates the efforts of a broad range of individuals, including city and county officials, Chambers of Commerce and other stakeholders. He and Major General Webber said they would continue to explore ways for the 24th

Air Command and local cyber programs to work together.

Rodriguez, who sits on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, has

been a leader in securing annual funding for UTSA's Cyber Security programs and hosted Committee Vice-Chairwoman Loretta Sanchez for a cyber roundtable in San Antonio in December.`

#